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The UPDATE is published quarterly by and for customers, retirees, and employees of Southwestern Power Administration like:



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Administrative
Support Technician,
Gore, Oklahoma

Special thanks to:

Mike Deihl
Ruben Garcia
Lynn King
Sharon King
Darlene Low
Tim Meeks
Jerry Murr
Bob Porter
Gene Reeves
DeAnn Rhea
Sharren Ripley
Larry Yadon

Steel pole replacements:

Reliability, durability and economy BY SHARREN RIPLEY

The transmission line crew from Southwestern's Gore office installed the first H-frame steel utility pole in January of this year. The site was the town of Council Hill, where structure 581, a wood pole, had originally been installed in the 1950's. It was selected as the first pole for replacement because of its extensive deterioration due to rot and woodpecker damage. A total of 11 steel H-frame structures have been purchased as replacement poles for the Gore transmission lines; Craft Superintendent Jerry Murr states that "all 11 are to be installed this year."



GORE CREWS DOUBLE-CHECK MEASUREMENTS TO ENSURE HIGH QUALITY WORKMANSHIP.



GARY GREGORY AND RONNIE McCARTY SECURE CONDUCTORS TO THE NEW STEEL H-FRAME STRUCTURE.

The advantages of steel structures over those made of wood are numerous. The projected life span of a steel pole is 80 years compared to 40 years for a wood pole. Steel structures are lighter in weight (less than half the weight of wood), making them easier to install and cheaper to transport, resulting in less wear-and-tear on equipment. They are impervious to woodpeckers and insect infestations. They are also fully recyclable. Steel structures are non-toxic and maintain their strength throughout their life span. They have a longer storage life than wood poles and require minimal maintenance.

The crew completed the installation of the approximately 4,000-pound steel H-frame structure within the course of one full work-day, removing the wooden pole and placing the steel structure in precisely the same location. The new poles were imbedded eight feet into the ground and coated chemically to prevent structural deterioration. Another advantage to the steel structure is that this application is a one-time occurrence; wood poles require repeated chemical applications to guard against rot.

There are groups of 11 H-frame structures at each Southwestern field location (Gore, Springfield, Jonesboro). Included with each is a 5-gallon plastic pail containing every

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BY MIKE DEIHL

Reconfirming Our Commitment

We at Southwestern continue our commitment to public service. **We** have successfully dealt with many challenges in recent years including the following:

We survived the Y2K rollover with no casualties. **We** maintained a highly reliable system. **We** endured many Federal budget challenges. **We** successfully sustained our proactive role in industry restructuring activities while protecting Federal power delivery interests . . . and the list goes on . . .

I wanted to take this opportunity to reconfirm Southwestern's commitment to several important issues for the future.

We remain committed to performing our mission of marketing and delivering Federal power to preference public bodies and cooperatives and implementing public policy. **We** continue to maximize the use of our assets to repay the Federal investment while balancing power needs with diverse water resource users. **We** will accomplish this through the lowest cost-based rates possible in a professional manner using good common business sense.

To remain an important player in the region's power system, **we** will stay in tune and extend our active participation in the development of regional tariffs and transmission organizations. While economic impacts to our customers are a very important concern, **we** cannot tolerate any compromise of system reliability. Our participation, along with individual customer and Southwestern Power Resources Association (SPRA) involvement, has produced successful agreements with Southwest Power Pool that have served us well. Southwestern will maintain our basic principles that our participation can only continue if it results in financial benefits, it does not violate our statutory responsibilities and/or legal obligations, and it supports changes in the industry without compromising reliability.

Ongoing efforts through the joint Hydro Power Conferences involving Southwestern, SPRA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has led to improved communications, better coordination and understandings, increased efficiencies, and stronger working relationships. **We** will continue to foster increased customer involvement in our decisions. Generating unit availability and scheduling, along with maximum utilization of the water resource, must be sustained as top priorities. **We** have made great strides in establishing the tools to provide customer funding to assist the Corps in maintaining their facilities. **We** have jointly made progress towards improved maintenance efficiencies between Southwestern and the Corps. **We** have found areas to eliminate redundancies between the two Federal agencies. New agreements are being reached that help deal with the challenge of water reallocation issues. Cooperation and involvement by all stakeholders to find solutions that benefit all customers will at times appear an impossible balancing act, but Southwestern is committed to working hard at finding the best solution possible for all classes of preference customers while protecting the Federal investment.

Southwestern moves into the new century continuing to be aggressive in implementing long-term internal cost control efforts. **We** have successfully trimmed staff without taking any adverse actions on a single employee. **We** will persist in our efforts by carefully examining every opportunity when a position vacancy occurs to see if there is an alternative way to get the job done. Our goal is to constantly improve and maintain a diverse, dedicated and professional staff that is second to none. **We** have implemented a new accounting and cost tracking system that will allow us to quickly and accurately determine our expenses and revenue streams to make sure **we** are getting the biggest bang for every buck. Great emphasis is being placed on having a strong information management and communications system that is cost effective. This era of increased competition and industry restructuring demands **we** have the staff and systems in place to keep delivering the level of service our customers expect.

I foresee a promising future for Southwestern. **We** have a reputation of being one of the industry's best benchmarks. All members of the Southwestern team are proud of their commitment to public service. I believe I speak for each one of them when I say, "**We** are here to serve." I look forward to the new century and the challenges Southwestern, the Corps and our customers face. Cooperation, understanding, and dedication will continue to be the keys to maintaining and operating a sophisticated and reliable power system. 💧

Michael A. Deihl
Administrator

SPRA Partners Honored

On January 13, Southwestern Administrator Michael A. Deihl presented the "Administrator's Award of Merit" to Ted Coombes, Executive Director, and Barbara DelGrosso, Membership Director, of the Southwestern Power Resources Association (SPRA). SPRA is a non-profit, 34-member trade association that represents Southwestern's customers in a six-state region. The recognition cited their "unparalleled creativity, leadership, and unwavering dedication to customer advocacy." 💧



TED COOMBES AND BARBARA DELGROSSO ACCEPT A SPECIAL AWARD OF MERIT FROM SOUTHWESTERN ADMINISTRATOR MIKE DEIHL

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needed installation component, which helps to streamline the installation process.

The steel structures are earmarked to replace those wood poles which have exceeded their life span and exhibit the greatest amount of deterioration due to rot and/or infestation. The reliability, durability and economy of the steel poles will help ensure the continued high level of service Southwestern's customers have come to expect. 💧



BILL WEBER, INTERNATIONAL UTILITY STRUCTURES INC., RICKEY JONES, WALTER EVANS, RONNIE McCARTY, SHARREN RIPLEY, JERRY MURR, MICHAEL KOENIG, GARY GREGORY AND GARY HAMMOND LINE UP WITH THE FINISHED PRODUCT .

Correction - The Educating Southwestern story on page 7 of the 1st Quarter FY 2000 Update inadvertently omitted a phrase. The sentence "The price of 100 MW varied from \$37,232 to a high of \$2,629,088 between June 2 and July 30" should have read "The price of 16 hours of 100 MW . . ." We apologize for the oversight.

Non-Event of the Century BY SHARON KING

On December 31, 1999, Southwestern employees Joe Durham (Electrical Engineer), Ken Legg (Director, Division of Engineering and Planning), and Sharren Ripley (Public Affairs Specialist) made the trip from Tulsa Headquarters to the Springfield facility as part of Southwestern's Y2K "watch" team. The three were present to help with any media requests, assist with restoration of the system if outages occurred and to make mandatory reports to DOE headquarters. They took sleeping bags, a three-day supply of clothing and food. Because of the level of preparedness, employees at the site were relaxed and confident, but ready to take action if needed.



**DALE BROTHERS, DWIGHT DAVID AND CURTIS HUNT
IN RELAXED BUT READY MODE.**



**KEN LEGG AND JOE DURHAM
LOG-IN TO REPORT TO D.C.**

Springfield employees contributed their usual professionalism to the evening. Jim Carnahan and Jeff Morman participated in the Southwest Power Pool requirements, reporting periodically, conducting conference calls and answering roll calls in addition to their normal dispatch duties. Rick Hixson kept a watchful eye on the SCADA system. Springfield, Gore and Jonesboro substation crews were ready to address any problems; thankfully, there were none.

Even though there was no champagne on the premises, everyone was gleeful at the uneventful New Year's Eve "affair." Meanwhile, back in Tulsa, Mike Deihl kept watch over Headquarters business, prepared for any Y2K-related eventuality. Although confident that Southwestern was ready, he, too, was relieved when things went so smoothly.



**RICK HIXSON MONITORS DISPATCH
EQUIPMENT.**

January 1 checks of the headquarters computer system by Information Resources Management personnel revealed that the system was running smoothly and would be ready for the January 3 resumption of the workweek.

Months of hard work and planning for Y2K paid off for Southwestern as the changeover from 1999 to 2000 proved to be a seamless one for the agency. 💧



**JAVA JIVE - SHARREN RIPLEY, RANDY STAPONSKI AND
JEFF MORMAN MARK TIME WITH A HOT CUPPA JOE.**

Media Weekend - A Rainbow Resort Tradition

BY SHARREN RIPLEY & SHARON KING

In 1963 Greers Ferry Lake became a reality when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed construction of a dam (spanning the Little Red River), forming a lake 50 miles long and creating a shoreline of 343 miles.

Lindsey's Rainbow Resort, in Heber Springs, Arkansas, is one of many resort facilities located on the Little Red River. The Lindsey family has operated the resort for over 34 years, longer than any other on the Little Red. Each January for 26 years the resort has sponsored a Media Weekend. Southwestern's Public Affairs



BILLY & TERRI, SUCCESSORS OF PARENTS BILL & MAVIS LINDSEY'S RAINBOW RESORT, WORK THE DESK OF THE FAMILY BUSINESS.



FISHING GUIDE JACK FOWLER

Specialist, Sharren Ripley, attended the most recent event to broaden her knowledge base on issues such as competing uses and to spread the word about Southwestern and its mission and achievements. Armed with several copies of the latest Annual Report, as well as numerous informational brochures, Sharren served as an ambassador for Southwestern to those in attendance. She was even asked to give a few remarks about Southwestern to the assembled group after dinner on Friday evening.

Owner Bill Lindsey, with a great deal of support from wife Mavis, constructed all of the buildings at the resort over a period of several years in the 1960's. The business has been family-owned and operated throughout its existence.

The Rainbow Resort is famous for the hospitality shown to guests by the entire Lindsey family. Son Billy Lindsey, current manager of the resort, is a big supporter of his state and local community. He has been a member of the Greers Ferry Lake and Little Red River Association for 24 years, serving three terms as President. He has also served on the Board of Directors of the Heber Springs Chamber of Commerce and the Arkansas Travel Council. Billy is the recipient of the Henry Award for Arkansas Tourism Person of the Year, an honor bestowed in 1990. 💧

VIEW OF LINDSEY'S RAINBOW RESORT FROM THE LITTLE RED RIVER.



Those Dreaded Droughts

BY DEANN RHEA



A hazard of nature, a drought is the reduction of water or moisture availability on a temporary basis, that is significant in relation to the “norm” and extends over a period of time, usually a season or more. There are four types of drought:

1. Meteorological - defined usually on the basis of the degree and the duration of the dry period;
2. Agricultural - which centers on the agricultural impacts such as crop development;
3. Socioeconomic - affects the supply and demand of economic goods such as water, forage, food grains, and fish; and
4. Hydrological, the subject of focus in this article.

Hydrological drought is associated with the effects of periods of precipitation shortfalls on surface or subsurface water supplies. Hydrological droughts are usually out of sync with meteorological and/or agricultural drought results. Why? A precipitation deficiency may result in a rapid depletion of soil moisture almost immediately discernible to agriculturists. This deficiency on reservoir levels may not affect hydroelectric power production or recreational uses for many months. Also, water in hydrologic storage systems (reservoirs, rivers, etc.), is used for multiple and competing uses (flood control, irrigation, recreation, navigation, hydropower, wildlife habit, etc.), which further complicates the formulation of impacts of the drought.

Southwestern looks at multiple indicators in making its assessment of drought conditions, including how the current trend of inflows compares with median (average/normal) conditions. Also viewed is a database of monthly inflows for all of Southwestern’s projects for a 70-year period of record to study these comparisons.

Also considered is the Palmer Drought Severity Index (PDSI), utilized by the National Weather Service (NWS) to quantify the status of the climatically induced water balance between rainfall and soil moisture. In addition, Southwestern appraises the amount of storage remaining in the seven system hydropower storage projects (Keystone, Eufaula, Tenkiller, Broken Bow, Beaver, Norfolk, and Greers Ferry). That value is represented as a percent of the total energy-in-storage for the seven projects. Long-term weather forecasts developed by the NWS are also assessed by Southwestern.

The season of the year must be considered in determining what actions to take in response to various factors. Lower water surface elevations are not as critical to recreation in the early fall and winter. There is also less of a risk to the hydropower interests during that period with the anticipation of the upcoming spring flood season to refill the pools.

Using Southwestern’s 70-year record of inflows to simulate operation of the lakes, there have been eight droughts that have brought the system below 100 percent full, ranging in duration from 18 to 35 months. The most severe and longest-lasting drought occurred in the early to mid-1950’s. This area experienced drought conditions from June 1952 through March 1957, although the system did fill back to 100 percent full a couple of times during that period. Southwestern markets its electrical capacity based on the water levels of the lakes during the peak electrical demand months of July and August.

Drought is a normal, recurring climatic event, although it is often considered rare and random. It occurs in virtually all climates, but its characteristics and assessment for action vary considerably from one region to another.

A special thanks goes to George Robbins and others in the Division of Scheduling & Operations for submitting information for this article. 💧



Southwestern is Flying Right BY DARLENE LOW

Southwestern was honored recently with a U. S. Department of Energy (DOE) Aviation Safety Award, accepted by Safety & Occupational Health Manager Darlene Low. The plaque cites "one year of accident-free flying while managing contractor and charter aircraft for the U.S. Department of Energy's aviation program."

The program was established to recognize exceptional aviation safety actions and/or service in the Department's program. It applies to all DOE employees, other Government agency employees, and selected contractor personnel.

Award nominations are processed through DOE field organizations and submitted to the chairperson of the Aviation Safety Awards Committee. The Senior Aviation Management Official has final authority for selecting recipients of the awards. 💧



**MIKE DEIHL AND GENE REEVES PROVE THAT
TRAINING SESSIONS CAN BE ENTERTAINING.**

case" scenario. He explained that, because our system is so far-flung, it makes sense for us to bring it back up via the usage of three separate "islands" when there is a blackout.

Joe explained that Southwestern's field offices will be staffed and extra employees will be on duty during the four-hour rollover period from December 31 to January 1. Emergency Management representatives will be in the field to provide overall coordination and integration. Joe urged the agency to remain in readiness mode after January 1, 2000, asking "Are we ready for Y2K?" The answer is "yes, but we still need to stay aware and finalize preparations."

January - In a clever spoof of a current popular TV game show, Jim "Outregis" Sherwood and Jim "Mr. Knowall" McDonald presented the fourth session of Southwestern's mandatory employee training for FY2000 on January 10. The theme, "Who Wants to Win 1,000,000 kWh?" was carried out with master of ceremonies Sherwood asking contestant McDonald a series of questions on the topic of SPP/RTO and Our Role. 💧

**KNOWALL McDONALD PRESSED BY
OUTREGIS SHERWOOD FOR HIS FINAL ANSWER.**

Educating Southwestern

December - "Y2K Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" was the theme of Southwestern's December 6, 1999 mandatory training session. Contract Specialist Scott Burns gave an overview of events leading to the Y2K computer issue and noted that Southwestern formed its Y2K team in 1998. Scott listed a number of preparatory actions which took place throughout 1999 at Southwestern, including the installation of Oracle in March and participation in nationwide NERC drills in April and September.

Electrical Engineer Joe Durham followed with his presentation on Southwestern's restoration strategy in a 'worst



RETIREMENTS

Beverly Dyer, Secretary to Administrator
Yvonne Grewe, Support Services Specialist
Bob Inman, Supervisory Power System Dispatcher

NEW EMPLOYEES

Stan Mason, Supervisory Power System Dispatcher
Sheldon McNeil, Power System Scheduler



SPRA ANNUAL MEETING
APRIL 4-6, 2000
DOUBLETREE DOWNTOWN
TULSA, OKLAHOMA

SOUTHWESTERN POWER UPDATE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
SOUTHWESTERN POWER ADMINISTRATION
ONE WEST THIRD STREET, SUITE 1400
TULSA, OKLAHOMA 74103

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PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$300

Porter Assumes Liaison Duties

BY TIM MEEKS



BOB PORTER

Robert Porter assumed the power marketing position in the Washington, D.C. liaison office on January 30, 2000. His responsibilities include Departmental and Congressional liaison, budgetary activities, and representation in Washington for the Southeastern and Southwestern Power Marketing Administrations.

He began his Federal career in the U.S. Navy in 1968, and assignments have included positions of increasing responsibility at the Bonneville and Western Area Power Marketing Administrations. His specific area of expertise is power marketing policy and procedure development, including power contract administration and marketing criteria and plan development.

Porter has a Bachelor of Science degree from Northern Illinois University and an MBA from Golden State University. He and his wife, Ruth, have five children and will reside in the Washington, D.C. area. 💧

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